

"No books or other publications of a sectarian, infidel or immoral character, shall be used or distributed in any common school, nor shall any sectarian, infidel or immoral doctrine be taught therein."

The section reads well. It looks magnanimous on its face. We have no present means of determining the precise legislative intent in the use of the term infidel. The General Assembly might have intended to use "infidel or immoral" in the conjunctive or the alternative. As a general proposition the State has no constitutional or moral right to teach belief or unbelief in the public schools, and it certainly ought not to teach immorality. And yet sectarianism will creep into the daily instructions fed to our children by the employment of teachers who are devotees of some particular and exclusive Christian sect. Infidels have never sought, nor do they seek now, to invade the little red school house with their beliefs or unbeliefs, hence, it was a superfluity to legislate against it, though deemed, by some, to be a wise proceeding.

So far as infidels are concerned they are satisfied that only a purely Secular Education be afforded the children; that only known truths should be taught them. All truth is infidel enough to the Christian creeds and thus armed, our children are fully safe-guarded from sectarian error and strife. The multiplication table is infidel to the doctrine of three in one, and one in three. Modern geography is infidel to the teachings of the old Testament and the early Christian church. Hygiene is infidel to the belief of the efficacy of prayer, while Geology, Astronomy and other branches of modern science given in the higher grades, are rank heresies.

From these known facts it will be seen that the teaching of accepted infidel doctrine in our public schools cannot be prevented, in spite of inhibitive legislation. Infidel doctrine is thus taught by common consent and with the full knowledge of all the educational authorities of the Commonwealth. And yet, there is neither sectarianism or immorality connected therewith. Here is an indication, or an implication, that the members of the General Assembly enacting the provision quoted, could not see far enough into the subject to really know and understand what they were doing.

As infidelity is actually being taught, and must be taught, we may infer that sectarianism and immorality, heavenly twins, were properly excluded from the curriculum of the public schools of Kentucky.

THE MENTAL CONFLICT.

Viewing the intellectual battle of the past few generations we must not be unmindful of the fact that the scene of activity is continually changing, the base of operations continually shifting. The same can be said of the participants, those who must take a prominent part in the fray. Every effort to bridge the gulf that exists between science and theology has met with utter failure, and every decade

sees that gulf growing continually wider.

It is but a few short years since scientists were compelled to seek and establish a harmony between geology and Genesis that geological facts might be accepted. Today the attack comes from the other side and theologians are occupied in an effort to reconcile Genesis with geology. Nor is this all, for the assaults that have wrecked the old testament, have been launched against the new testament to such an extent that the bible is no longer regarded as a divine emanation, but a book written absolutely by man for man and to enable some men to dominate over other men. The bible, as a whole, has had the supernatural ruled out of it and must be subjected to scientific criticism. Intellect has won only after a long and bitter struggle, until, today, the battle is now practically left to the advocates of the different theologies themselves, with men of science as mere spectators, indifferent as to what the outcome will be.

Many living today will be able to recall the fact that infidels, not so very long ago, were required to make some sort of an apology for the beliefs or unbeliefs they held. Now the believer is almost compelled to apologize for the fact of his belief, and this is the direct result of intellectual effort. The majority of men, who are really indifferent concerning orthodoxy, may regard Jesus as some sort of a vague historical character, about which fanciful tales have been constructed, but they will be ready at any time to question, and express serious doubts, about his alleged divine origin and miraculous disappearance from earth. By almost common consent these doctrines are tacitly rejected, and the man who does reject them, because of their plain absurdities, is not required to offer anything as a substitute. This cleavage has gone into the internal elements of religious organizations, which must lead to an unsettling of religious faith, out of which the new religion of humanity, if it may be called a religion, must come.

Christian tradition has long since lost its hold upon the public mind. Men are more interested in the things of today than they are in the things of yesterday. They refuse to recognize the past as a dominant factor for present good. Experience alone can direct men in the proper direction for the common good. The past may be studied with profit, as indicating what we should strive to emulate and that which we ought to avoid if we would bring human happiness to its full limit. Happiness is not to be found in orthodoxy; history alone will prove that to be a fact. If happiness is not a mere ignus fatui, but a condition to be actually reached, then we must look for it outside of and beyond all religions. No religion known to man was ever instituted or established upon proper, binding authority. All are of human origin and all hold certain fundamental principles in common. They may vary in detail and it is this very detail that creates sectarianism, divisions and sub-divisions of one system, and between these sectarian votaries the fight will be prolonged.